

Message Text

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62

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 /043 W

----- 075416

R 060822Z JAN 75 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1781

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 0057

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, SN

SUBJECT: P-3 FLIGHTS TO SINGAPORE

REFS: STATE 000694

1. EMBASSY HAS NO PROBLEM WITH INITIATION OF PROJECTED P-3 FLIGHTS AT FREQUENCY ENVISIONED REFTEL. GOS HAS NEVER QUESTIONED PAST OCCASIONAL FLIGHTS AND EITHER "TRAINING AND FAMILIARIZATION" OR "R AND R FOR CREW" ARE CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR MILITARY A/C CLEARANCE. EMBASSY REGRETS, HOWEVER, THAT FIRST FLIGHT SENT UNDER SCHEME PRIOR TO EMBASSY BEING INFORMED.

2. ALTHOUGH EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY TO ADVISE GOS AT THIS TIME OF BASIC PURPOSE OF FLIGHTS AS SET FORTH PARA 2 REFTEL, WE DO THINK IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE CONTINUE TO INFORM GOS OF PRECISE PURPOSE OF EACH INDIVIDUAL FLIGHT, E.E., AIRCREW TRAINING AND AREA FAMILIARIZATION. FURTHERMORE, IF AT SOME POINT GOS QUESTIONS WHY NAVY HAS INCREASED NUMBER OF SUCH FLIGHTS TO SINGAPORE, WE MUST BE PREPARED TO ADVISE GOS CANDIDLY THAT ONE OF THE PURPOSES OF AREA FAMILIARIZATION FLIGHTS IS TO PREPARE AIRCREWS FOR POSSIBLE CONTINGENCIES
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SUCH AS SOME POSSIBLE FUTURE REQUIREMENT TO STAGE OPERATIONAL

SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS TO OR THROUGH SINGAPORE. HOWEVER, SUCH AN EXPLANATION WOULD HAVE TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ABSOLUTE ASSURANCE THAT NO SUCH FLIGHTS WOULD BE STAGED THROUGH OR INTO SINGAPORE WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING GOS CONCURRENCE.

3. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT PURPOSE OF FLIGHTS ENVISIONED VALID, BUT WISHES TO WARN THAT AN ESTABLISHED PATTERNS OF USAGE WOULD AT BEST HAVE ONLY THE MOST MARGINAL EFFECT ON GOS ATTITUDE TOWARD FLIGHTS FOR "OTHER PURPOSES." GOS POLICY ON SUCH FLIGHTS WOULD BE DECIDED ONLY AFTER CAREFULLY CALCULATED POLITICAL DECISION BY PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW WHETHER SUCH FLIGHTS WOULD BE IN SINGAPORE'S INTEREST. EVENIF GOS WERE PREPARED TO ACCEPT OPERATIONAL P-3 FLIGHTS STAGED TO OUR THROUGH SINGAPORE, WHICH WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT DECISION IN VIEW OF ITS PROFESSED POLICY OF NON ALIGNMENT, IT WOULD PROBABLY DO SO ONLY IF U.S. AGREED THAT REAL PURPOSE OF SUCH FLIGHTS WOULD BE KEPT SECRET AND ALL PRESS QUERIES STONEWALLED.

4. ANY LACK OF CANDOR ON OUR PART WITH GOS OR ANY ATTEMPT TO STAGE ACTUAL P-3 OPERATIONAL FLIGHTS THROUGH SINGAPORE OR TO HAVE P-3S ENGAGE IN SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES EN ROUTE (OTHER THAN LIMITED SURVEILLANCE EXERCISES RELATED SOLELY TO TRAINING) WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATIONS WITH EMBASSY AND GOS WOULD NOT ONLY PRECLUDE ANY POSSIBILITY OF GOS COOPERATION BUT COULD ALSO JEOPARDIZED PRESENT GOS WELCOME TO VISITS BY UNITS OF U.S. SEVENTH FLEET. THUS NO ATTEMPT SHOULD BE MADE TO STAGE ACTUAL P-3 OPERATIONAL FLIGHTS THROUGH OR INTO SINGAPORE PRIOR TO CONSULTATION WITH EMBASSY AND GOS.
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